

BACO FOOD PRODUCTS FACTORY (HO328)



Craig Street facade – west end



Craig Street elevation - east end



Mcneilage Street elevation (west)

Location

121-129 CRAIG STREET SPOTSWOOD, HOBSONS BAY CITY

Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 7, 2026

What is significant?

The former Baco Food Products building at 121-129 Craig Street, Spotswood, constructed in 1948 for Baco Food Products, and later the site where Spring Valley Juices were first produced, is locally significant.

Significant elements include the following original or early elements:

- Hipped roof form,

- Rendered and concrete block elevations,
- Ribbed panels to Craig Street facade,
- Original openings with metal-framed windows with textured safety glass,
- Recessed entry with metal security gates and granolithic tiled flooring,
- Vehicle entrances to McNeilage and Ramsay street elevations with metal roller door.

Elements that do not contribute to the significance of the place include the following non-original elements:

- Recent upper-level addition,
- Two awnings to west end of Craig Street facade,
- Infilled door to east end of Craig Street elevation.

How is it significant?

The former Baco Food Products is historically and aesthetically significant to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it significant?

The former Baco Food Products is historically significant as it illustrates the desirability of the Spotswood area for various types of industry in the post-WWII period.

Spotswood was established as a major centre for industry during the late 19th century, with new operations and existing concerns relocating from other parts of the city seeking vacant sites with water access and proximity to central Melbourne. Through the Interwar period, the enlargement of the Victorian Railway's facilities in the area and industrial sites like the immense Australian aConsolidated Industries complex on Booker Street, further solidified this circumstance.

The Post-WWII period saw Spotswood become entrenched as key centre of industry and manufacturing in Melbourne, anchored by the established concerns including the Australian Glass Manufacturing site and buoyed by the large-scale development of petrochemical and refinery operations oil industry which developed south of Craig Street during the late interwar and post-WWII periods. The construction of the Baco Food Products building, a relatively small-scale manufacturing site for baking confectionary which later pivoted to bottling fruit juice, demonstrates this growth into a diverse industry nexus by this period.

(Criterion A)

The former Baco Food Products is aesthetically significant as a well-resolved and largely intact example of an industrial building designed in the Functionalist style during the early post-WWII period. Typical of that style, the building has a largely unadorned expression to the exterior which reflects the internal function of the manufacturing programme.

The restrained expression of the Craig Street facade is typical of the Functional style with a pronounced horizontal emphasis provided by an extensive use of metal-framed windows in a distinct band and which is enhanced by the distinctive ribbed panels of the main rendered administrative section. The latter section is also distinguished the contrasting verticality of the off-centre entry bay that extends above the main level of the parapet and features a recessed entrance with a metal security gate and granolithic tiled entrance.

(Criterion E)

Construction dates	1948,
Hermes Number	216276
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Description

The former Baco Food Products building is located on the south side of Craig Street, between Mcneilage and Ramsay streets within the mixed residential/industrial landscape of southern Spotswood, between the Williamstown Railway Line and the Birrarung/Yarra River. It occupies the northern end of the parcel of land and due to the corner location, is widely visible from the public realm, that is from the north, east and west.

The building was developed in two phases: a 1948 office and bottling plant designed in the Functionalist style to the corner and late 20th century addition to rear.

Original Building

The single storey Functionalist style administration and factory building is located to the north part of the site. The roof is concealed behind masonry facades and consists of two hipped roof sections, both clad in corrugated sheet metal with ridge ventilators.

The building is constructed of concrete block with the prominent administrative section at the west end of the north/Craig Street elevation being rendered. The windows are generally steel-framed and multi-paned of varying size with translucent glass (typically reinforced with wire mesh) and the larger windows including hoppers. The downpipes with rain heads from the boxed gutters are located at regular intervals on each elevation.

The prominence of the administrative section is further emphasised from the rest of the building by it projecting slightly forward of the plane of the other sections of wall and by having a taller parapet with a stepped coping. This section's asymmetric configuration pivots about the taller main entry bay, which also projects further forward. The recessed entrance features a metal security gate with geometric detailing and a granolithic tiled floor.

The verticality of the entry bay is juxtaposed with the general horizontal emphasis established by the band of windows, which is further enhanced by the ribbed panels between the regular fenestration pattern of the administrative section. Though the windows to the factory part at the east end of the facade are larger, the clear horizontal emphasis is maintained. There is also a non-original timber door to the factory section, which has been introduced within a formerly larger window near the junction with the administrative section.

The subtle shifts in plane, contrasting horizontal and vertical emphasis, and a restrained material palette with minimal ornamentation are characteristic of the Functionalist style. This style reflected a continuity with the Interwar period Moderne style in the immediate post-WWII era however is a more restrained iteration of the earlier style and more decidedly rectilinear (that is without curved corners which are typical of the Moderne style). The Functionalist style was often employed on industrial buildings and blocks of flats at this time.

The Mcneilage Street elevation has an asymmetrical configuration of openings. At the north end is a band of smaller window openings – an alternating pattern of two narrow louvred and a square multi-paned window. At the south end is a vehicular entrance, with metal door inset with an inset pedestrian entrance, and a single large multi-paned window.

The Ramsay Street elevation is symmetrical with a central vehicular entrance, which has a metal roller door and inset pedestrian entrance, flanked by two large multi-paned windows.

Rear addition (not part of HO boundary)

To the rear (south) is a late 20th century addition. It is setback from the side elevation of the original part to the

west side (Mcneilage Street) but extends to the boundary on the east side (Ramsay Street). This taller section has an asymmetric gable roof on a recycled red brick base. The upper sections of wall at the western end are clad in profiled metal sheeting. The windows are of a similar steel-framed type to the original section.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

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